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The University of Montana

NEWS RELEASE

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Sept. 27, 1996

UM POSTS RECORD ENROLLMENT FOR FALL SEMESTER

MISSOULA --

The largest freshman class in University of Montana history and a growth spurt at the College of Technology helped lift fall semester student enrollment to a record high of 11,886.

Fall 1995 enrollment was 11,753.

The Missoula campuses also posted an increase in full-time equivalents (FTEs) this fall. "Not all of our students are full-time students, but if they were, we'd have 10,561," said UM Registrar Phil Bain.

An FTE represents 15 undergraduate credits and 12 graduate credits per semester.

"The numbers are very encouraging," said President George Dennison. "The increase represents about one percent in head count and two percent in FTE. The load of credits our students are carrying has increased again, which means we are making courses available to them."

The freshman class swelled to 1,768, up 98 students from last year. The class of 2000 is made up of 1,130 Montanans and 638 students from other states.

The College of Technology in Missoula posted a dramatic enrollment increase of 110 students, up almost 15 percent from last year's total of 633. The trend is shared by UM's Helena College of Technology and College of Technology at Montana Tech.

"This year we achieved the increase we had hoped for at all three colleges of technology," Dennison said.

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Enrollment at the Helena College of Technology is 608, up 15 percent over last year; enrollment at Montana Tech's College of Technology is 402, up 20 percent.

Dennison attributes the increased popularity of the colleges of technology to new course and program offerings and stable tuition costs. He said UM also is doing a better job of informing students about what is available to them.

College of Technology Dean Dennis Lerum said two new programs -- pharmacy technology and medical laboratory technology -- accounted for almost half of the increase at the Missoula campus.

"Now that we are identified with the University, we see folks looking at us differently than before," Lerum said. "They look at us as a more desirable opportunity for education than they have in the past. The association has increased our viability and credibility."

The number of graduate students changed little at 1,353, compared with 1,357 in the fall of 1995.

The number of transfer students decreased by 158 this year. Frank Matule, director of Admissions and New Student Services, said retention programs at colleges around the nation are starting to show results, with students staying at the colleges at which they began.

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